



THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary
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**Statement by the White House Press Secretary Robert Gibbs
on Elections in Sudan**

The elections held recently in Sudan were an essential step in a process laid out by Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The United States notes the initial assessment of independent electoral observers that Sudan's elections did not meet international standards. Political rights and freedoms were circumscribed throughout the electoral process, there were reports of intimidation and threats of violence in South Sudan, ongoing conflict in Darfur did not permit an environment conducive to acceptable elections, and inadequacies in technical preparations for the vote resulted in serious irregularities. The United States regrets that Sudan's National Elections Commission did not do more to prevent and address such problems prior to voting.

The people of Sudan are to be commended for their efforts to make Sudan's first multi-party elections in over two decades peaceful and meaningful. In the months and years ahead it will be critical to continue pressing for progress for the civil and political rights of all of the Sudanese people. This priority will not expire with the CPA, and all parties should draw on this experience to improve preparations for future elections and referenda.

The United States also remains committed to working with the international community to support implementation of outstanding elements of the CPA and ensure that the referendum happens on time and that its results are respected. With partners in the region and beyond, we will continue to engage in the preparations necessary to support peace and stability after the 2011 referenda, and continue to promote peace, security, and accountability in Darfur.